

Travel

CLOSE-UP ON ENFIELD, N.H.

GET UP AND OUT

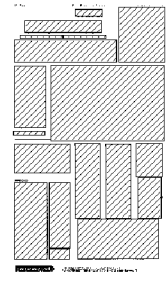
RECREATION POSSIBILITIES ABOUND
 IN NEW HAMPSHIRE'S UPPER VALLEY

BY SACHA PFEIFFER | GLOBE STAFF

Located in the Connecticut River Watershed in New Hampshire's Upper Valley, this low-key town may be best known as the home of the Enfield Shaker Museum, which pays tribute to a utopian religious community that lived, worked, and worshiped here in the mid-1800s. In the center of town is lovely Mascoma Lake, a year-round playground for swimmers, boaters, and ice fishermen. The local landscape is also replete with woodlands, streams, encircling hills, hiking trails, boat launches, and geographic attractions like Mount Assurance, Crystal Lake, and Moose Mountain. Recreation opportunities abound, especially since Enfield is on the path of the Northern Rail Trail, which is open to walkers, horseback riders, bicyclists, cross-country skiers, and dog sleds. Some travelers simply use the town as a home base to visit nearby Hanover (where you can tour the Dartmouth College campus), Lebanon (where you can visit the handsome Lebanon Opera House), and Norwich, Vt. (where you can take a baking class, buy cooking supplies, or sample homemade treats at the King Arthur Flour complex).

DO

Enfield's main draw for visitors is the **Enfield Shaker Museum** (447 Route 4A, 603-632-4346, shakermuseum.org), a complex of nine historic buildings that housed a community of Shaker families in the 19th century. The Shakers, who were committed to pacifism, communal ownership of property, and equality of sexes and races, strove to make the town their heaven on earth by farming 3,000 acres, educating their children in model schools, and worshipping the "Shaker Way." Among the site's attractions are herb and flower gardens; a collection of Shaker furniture, photographs, and agricultural tools; a museum store; and the Great Stone Dwelling, the largest Shaker house ever constructed. Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the complex is open from Memorial Day through mid-October. Across the street is **La Salette Shrine** (Route 4A, Lower Shaker Village, 603-632-7087), which commemorates a village in the French Alps where Mary, the mother of Jesus, is said to have appeared to two shepherd children in 1846. A self-described "place of prayer and meditation," the Enfield site is open year-round and includes a garden, chapel, gift shop, and guest housing that provides limited lodging. In the growing season, the **Enfield Farmers Market** is held on Wednesdays from 3-6 p.m. at Huse Park (Route 4 and Main Street) from July to October, rain or shine.



FUEL

The fanciest eating spot in Enfield is **Seasons Restaurant & Marketplace** (56 Main St., 603-632-7256, seasonsmarketplace.com, \$13-\$31), which emphasizes local, organic foods, from artisanal cheese plates to rack of lamb to grilled tenderloin. It also has a full liquor license and, when weather is warm enough, outdoor dining. At **Mickey's Roadside Café** (330 Route 4, 603-632-9400, \$5-\$18), where the dining room feels like an expansive country kitchen, the mostly cheap-eats selection includes subs, burgers, pasta, and seafood. For a wider selection of restaurants, hop over to neighboring Lebanon, just a short drive away, where **Three Tomatoes Trattoria** (1 Court St., 603-448-1711, threetomatoestrattoria.com, \$9-\$18) makes great Italian food, including delicious pastas and pizzas, and the **Salt Hill Pub** (2 West Park, 603-448-4532, www.salthillpub.com, \$6-\$16) serves surprisingly good tavern fare, from Guinness beef stew to blackened salmon salad. In the back of **Lebanon Health Foods** (90 Hanover St., 603-448-3700, \$3-\$7), there's a small cafe that makes simple soups, salads, and sandwiches, including a bland but virtuous lentil burger.

PLAY

Enfield is a worthy destination for outdoor activities, especially winter sports and water sports.

Whaleback Mountain (exit 16 off Interstate 89, Whaleback Mountain Road, 603-448-1489, whaleback.com), a self-described "year-round action sports facility," offers skiing, snowboarding, and snow tubing in the winter. In the summer, its offerings include paintball, in-line skating, and mountain biking, and it also operates a skate park in Hartford, Vt. In the next-door town of Grantham, the 3,600-acre **Eastman** complex (exit 13 off Interstate 89, 603-863-4240, eastmannh.com) includes trails for cross-country skiing and snowshoeing, as well as a golf course, tennis courts, and hiking trails. The property also has a two-mile lake for swimming, sailing, and fishing. If you're searching for a **boat launch**, Enfield has several: for Crystal Lake, use Algonquin Road; for George Pond, use Bog Road; for Mascoma Lake, use Route 4A at Main Street, near the Shaker Bridge; and for Spectacle Pond, use Lockehaven Road. There are **hiking trails**, too, including the Bicknell Brook Trail on Grafton Pond Road, Colette Trail on Boys' Camp Road, Cole Pond trail on Bog Road, and the Northern Rail Trail (northernrailtrail.org) near Pillsbury Street off Main.

PARTY

For memories of 1950s grade school, visit the **Great View Roller Skating Rink** (180 Route 4, 603-632-7878, greatviewfuncenter.com), a cavernous place housed in a massive windowless warehouse. Inside, besides the rink itself, are video games, skee ball, a simple concession counter, and '80s music blaring overhead. Now nearing the end of its first season, **Shaker Bridge Theatre** (Whitney Hall Auditorium, 23 Main St., 603-632-4013, shakerbridgetheatre.org) promises "provocative contemporary theater," such as "Murderers" by Jeffrey Hatcher, which runs until May 25. Outdoor Shakespeare-in-the-park is tentatively planned for this summer. For more culture, head to nearby Lebanon, home to **Opera North** (603-448-4141, operanorth.org), a professional opera company in New Hampshire's Upper Valley. Performances are typically held at the **Lebanon Opera House** (51 North Park St., 603-448-0400, lebanonoperahouse.org) and the 2008 season features Puccini's "Madame Butterfly" and Mozart's "The Magic Flute." Also in Lebanon, the **Salt Hill Pub** (2 West Park, 603-448-4532, www.salthillpub.com, \$6-\$16) has live Irish music sessions on Tuesdays at 6 p.m. and open mike nights on Thursdays at 9.

SPEND

The shopping scene in Enfield is sleepy, to say the least, but there are a few stores in town if you're desperate to spend your federal refund check. **All Things Creative** (60 Main St., 603-632-5427, all-things-creative.net) sells what it describes as "handmade and homegrown" goods, including music, literature, and the work of local artists and craftspeople. The **Dancing Bear Trading Post & Flea Market** (502 Route 4, 603-632-4473) is a no-frills place selling antiques and collectibles. Besides offering framing, **Red Roof Gallery**

& **Frame Shop** (11 High St., 603-632-5143, redroofgallery.com) sells prints and posters, and showcases the work of local and regional artists. **Safflowers** (468 Route 4, 603-632-4700, safflowers.net) is a small florist that also sells cute little gifts like candles, chocolates, and handbags. Just as tiny is **S'Mores Gifts** (554 Route 4, 603-632-9919), wedged in a bare-bones strip mall between a Dunkin' Donuts and the Enfield House of Pizza. Its selection includes greeting cards, candles, stuffed animals, some specialty foods, and decorative household items. To find **Bearly Used Books** (414 Route 4, 603-632-9871, abebooks.com/home/bearlyus), look for the gray clapboard house with a sign of a teddy bear reading a book.

REST

Enfield has two B&Bs with similar names. One, with a front-yard view of Shaker Mountain, is **Shaker Hill Bed & Breakfast** (259 Shaker Hill Road, 603-632-4519, shakerhill.com, \$90-\$115), whose four guest rooms are in a 1790s Colonial home. The other, **Shaker Farm Bed & Breakfast** (597 Route 4A, 603-632-7664, shakerfarm.com, \$125), has six guest rooms and is within walking distance of the Shaker Museum and Mascoma Lake. Right on Crystal Lake, there's also the two-guestroom **Stanford Bed & Breakfast** (241 Crystal Lake, 603-632-9949, bedandbreakfast.com/new-hampshire-enfield-stanford-bedbreakfast.html, \$90-\$110), a modern log home where deer and wild turkeys sometimes amble by. Guests also have access to a dock, canoe, and kayaks. At **La Salette Shrine** (Route 4A, Lower Shaker Village, 603-632-7087), a small guest house offers accommodations, including a kitchen, for up to eight people. The guest house is frequently used by small groups or families for

private retreats, meetings, and getaways. For chain lodging, head to next-door Lebanon, where there are a slew of brand-name hotels and motels.

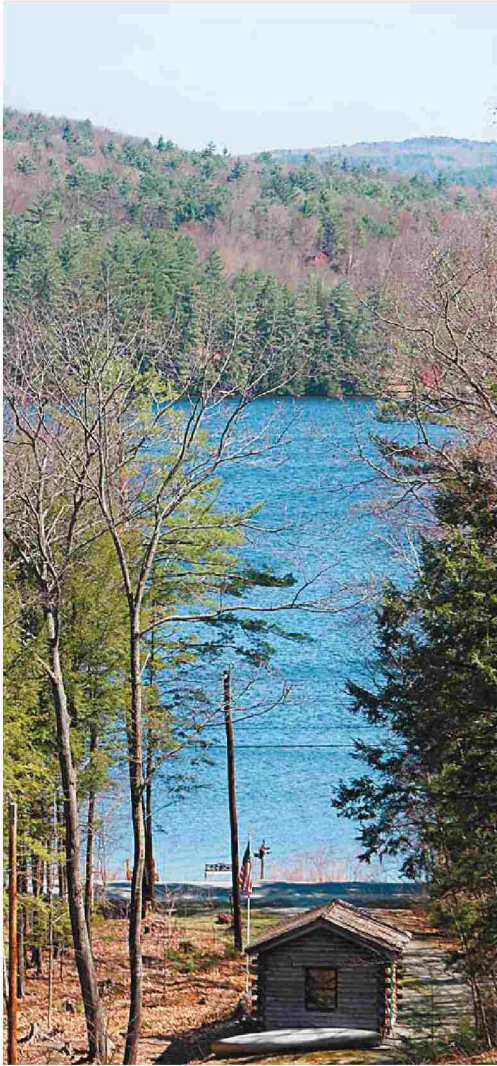


PHOTOS BY JONATHAN WIGGS/GLOBE STAFF

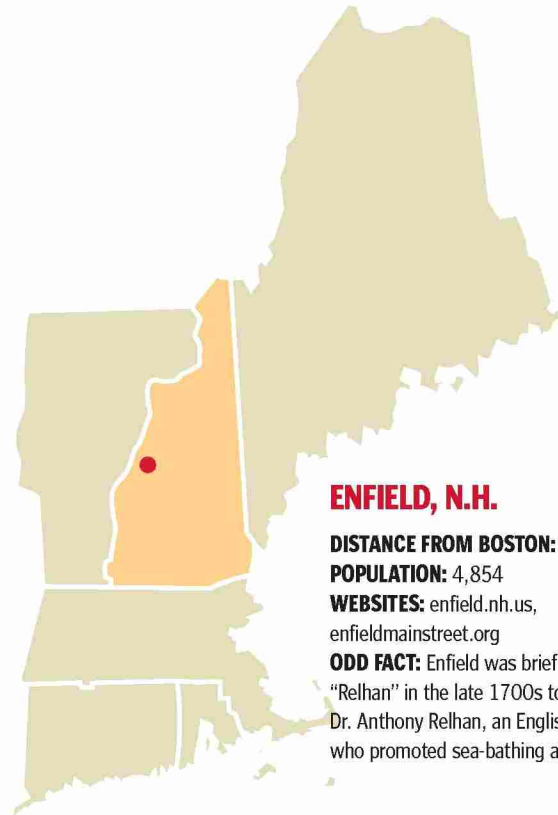
The spinning room in the Great Stone Dwelling at the Enfield Shaker Museum.



"Apple Tree" by Dick Fischer at the Red Roof Gallery & Frame Shop, which showcases the work of local artists.



The view from Stanford Bed & Breakfast, where guests have access to boats.



ENFIELD, N.H.

DISTANCE FROM BOSTON: 124 miles

POPULATION: 4,854

WEBSITES: enfield.nh.us,
enfieldmainstreet.org

ODD FACT: Enfield was briefly renamed "Relhan" in the late 1700s to honor Dr. Anthony Relhan, an English physician who promoted sea-bathing as a curative.